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ABSTRACT

This report is a collection of abstracts describing the salient features of 20 adoption programs for children and infants of black and biracial background and attempts to delineate those program features which appear to be associated with effectiveness. Information on each program was collected by means of an unstructured interview with individuals at various staff and administrative levels. An account of each program is given under the following headings: Duration; auspices; purpose; staff involved; methods; community involvement; publicity; intra-agency modifications or innovations; inter-agency efforts; problems and obstacles encountered; steps taken to solve problems, if any; factors reported as most helpful; and cost to adoptive parent. Certain themes were recurrent in the summaries: (1) the primary goal of all programs was to find adoptive homes for black and mixed background children, (2) the auspices of the programs varied considerably, (3) nearly all respondents gave top priority to involvement of the black community in the development of programs, policies and procedures, (4) state, county and municipal departments of of Public welfare play an important role in the workings of adoption agencies, (5) respondents stressed the importance of inter-agency cooperation and coordination for effectiveness, (6) limited funds and staff account for restricted efforts to increase the number of adoptive placements, and (7) most programs attempt to inform the public about the magnitude and urgency of the need usually through use of mass media. (GO)

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Families for Black Children

The Search for Adoptive Parents

II. Programs and Projects

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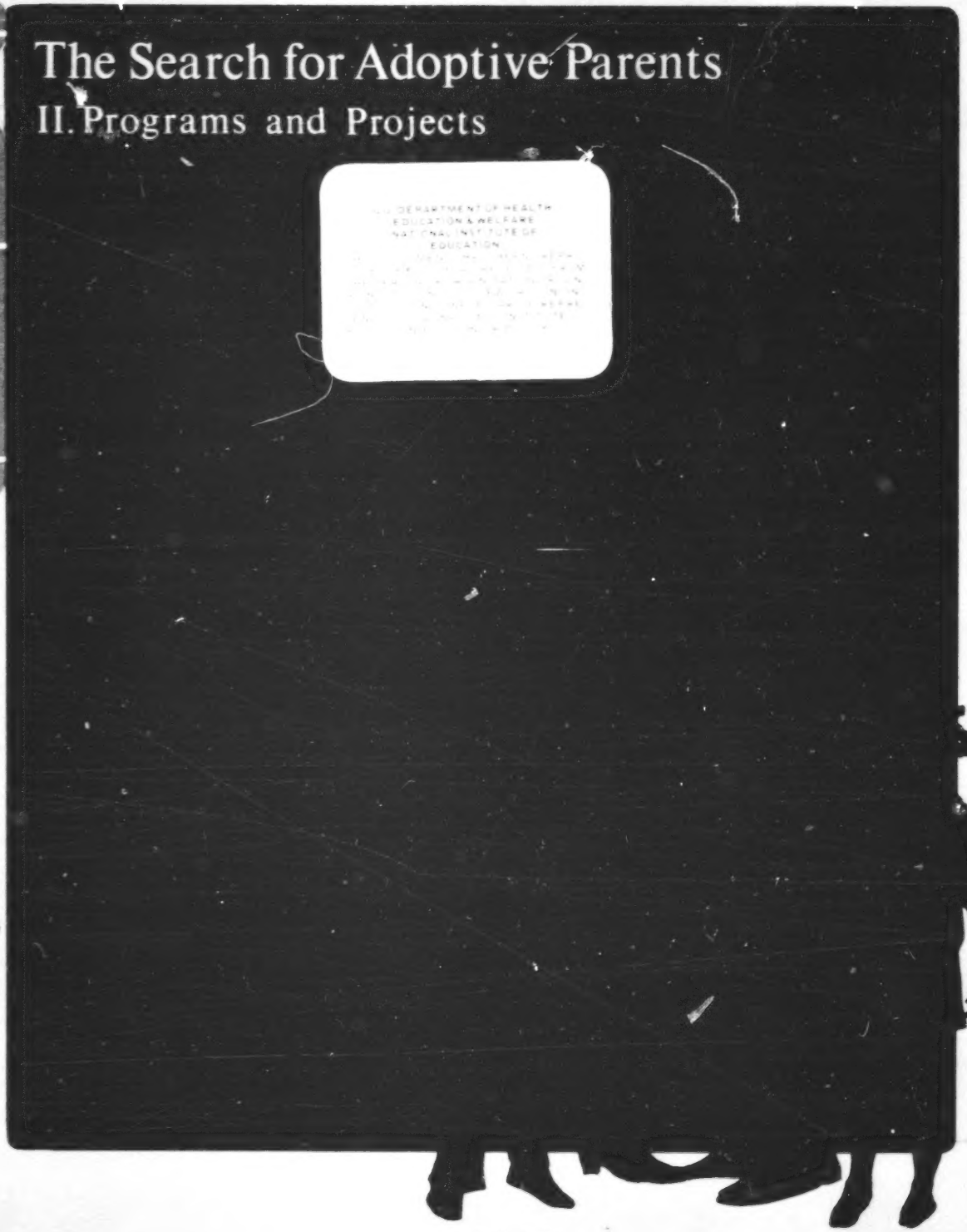

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This report is the second publication of the Children's Bureau series of resources for facilitating the adoption of black children. Families for Black Children, The Search for Adoptive Parents I. An Experience Survey, was a survey of informed opinion on information, ideas, and suggestions for recruiting more families for black children.

The present report, Families for Black Children, The Search for Adoptive Parents II. Programs and Projects, is a collection of abstracts describing the salient features of some twenty programs and projects which are already in progress throughout the country, together with a general statement of some of the recurrent themes.

We hope that our readers will use these suggestions as a beginning, from which they will go on to build and develop programs as needed in many communities in this country. This Office will continue to provide leadership and national coordination in this effort; but it is only through special efforts in each locale, tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of the community, that we can hope, finally, to solve these problems. These issues have broad social causes, but they must ultimately be dealt with in the small intimate fabric of child, family, and neighborhood.

Frederick C. Green, M.D.
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Families for Black Children

The Search for Adoptive Parents

II. Programs and Projects

A cooperative roport prepared by Annie Lee Sandusky, Jane Harwood Rea, and Ursula Gallagher of the Children's Bureau, Office of Child Development and Elizabeth Herzog of the Social Research Group, The George Washington University.

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PURPOSE, METHOD, AND RECURRENT THEMES

This report offers summary descriptions of some current efforts to increase the number of adoptive homes available for black children who are in need of placement.* It is a supplement to an earlier report published under the same title.** The first report was an "experience survey" designed to tap the opinions of individuals in strategic positions with regard to relevant information: adoptive parents, social workers, key members of the black community. The supplement describes ongoing programs or projects, in order to suggest which program features are more and which less frequent, and some clues to the features which, in the view of agency members, are strongly associated with effectiveness.

The intention was to request interviews only with agencies or projects that include special efforts to increase the number of black adoptions, but not to attempt either complete coverage or a statistical sample. The programs and projects described represent a pooling of information by staff of the Children's Bureau, Office of Child Development and the Child Welfare League of America, plus occasional fortuitous additions through informal discussion. In some instances, exigencies prevented visiting a program on the designated list. Accordingly, the programs included here cannot be viewed either as a statistical sample, a full inventory, or a selection based on specified criteria of effectiveness. They do, however, provide a variety of examples of the ways in which different social agencies and other groups are trying to augment our resources for recruiting more adoptive families for black children.

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* In the remainder of the report, "black children" should be understood to mean children and infants of black and biracial background.

** Herzog, Elizabeth; Sudia, Cecelia; Harwood, Jane; and Newcomb, Carol. Families for Black Children: The Search for Adoptive Parents. An Experience Survey. A cooperative report of the Children's Bureau, Office of Child Development, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and The Social Research Group, The George Washington University. Washington, D. C. 20402: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1971.

Interviewing was unstructured but standardized in the sense that an effort was made to cover the same points in each interview. Interviews were conducted by Mrs. Annie Lee Sandusky and Miss Ursula Gallagher of the Children's Bureau.

Interviews were held with individuals involved at various staff and administrative levels in the programs and projects reported. Our respondents were unfailingly generous in giving their time and the benefit of their experience. To the extent that this publication is useful for the field, their contribution has made it so. And we believe that it should be useful, since it condenses a great deal of experience relevant for those conducting or planning similar programs. This belief is supported by the frequent questions raised by the respondents about what is being done by other organizations. That our efforts have benefited by their contribution is beyond question, and they have our hearty thanks for their help. The thanks are both individual and organizational, even though identification is by agency only.

The summaries given below reflect what we were told during the interviews. Any statements about the values or disadvantages of specific program elements come from the respondents. We have tried merely to report what they told us, without editorial elaboration or comment.

This report, like the earlier experience survey, was prepared jointly by the staff of the Children's Bureau and the Social Research Group of the George Washington University.

Program Objectives

The programs summarized had in common one primary goal: to find adoptive homes for black and mixed-background children. For the most part, the main emphasis was on recruiting adoptive parents and placing children, with efforts at publicizing the problem viewed as indispensable but secondary components. Several programs, however, concentrated chiefly on the information function--that is, on increasing awareness, within the black community, of the size and urgency of the need. Only one or two respondents specifically mentioned services to unmarried mothers as part of their primary emphasis. Those who did made it clear that such services were offered as freely to unmarried mothers who planned to keep their children as to those wanting to place the children in adoption. A few programs included all children with special needs, and a few included foster home placements.

Auspices

The auspices of the 20 programs or projects reviewed vary considerably. Some are conducted by voluntary agencies or organizations, some by public agencies, and some by a combination of public and voluntary. Some are conducted by a single agency or organization, some by a number working in cooperation.

Voluntary auspices outnumber the public or combined public-and-voluntary among the programs reviewed. Since these do not constitute either a statistical sample or complete coverage, it cannot be assumed that the relative proportions of voluntary, public, and combined voluntary-public reflect accurately the proportions in all current programs or projects for increasing the number of adoptive homes available to black children in need of placement.

Recurrent Themes

A number of factors re-appear throughout the summaries with a frequency and emphasis that suggests strong consensus concerning their value and importance. Although they are set down separately, it is clear that to a considerable degree these factors are interlocking and interactive. Their order in the following pages does not imply relative frequency or salience, because each one is regarded as a sine qua non by the many who mention it.

Community involvement

Involvement of the black community in the development of programs, policies, and procedures, is given top priority by virtually all respondents. Recognition of this need comes out in a number of ways, both explicit and implicit, and in a variety of efforts to meet it: participation in the development of programs, policies, and procedures; membership on boards and committees; activity as volunteers with emphasis on imaginative and meaningful use of "volunteer power"; engagement of community members as interpreters of need, eligibility requirements, and policies to the community--and as interpreters of community preferences, attitudes, and reactions to agencies and organizations.

Role of public welfare departments

Review of the summaries--and even more of the interviews--brings out the importance of the role played by the departments of public welfare--state, county, and municipal. Substantial increase in the placements of black and mixed-background children appears most likely to occur when the state department of public welfare and the departments of public welfare in large cities play an active role in: (a) coordinating recruitment efforts of all adoption agencies, voluntary and public; (b) providing long-range and continuous publicity and educational programs regarding the need for adoptive placements and a clear picture of what agencies do and do not require; (c) establishing a statewide adoption resource exchange for inter-agency and inter-state exchange of children who might not otherwise be placed through individual agency effort; (d) giving leadership in improving and making more uniform agency procedures and practices; (e) promoting the development of adoption programs for

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black and other difficult-to-place children on a statewide basis in local public welfare agencies, using state funds as an incentive.

Inter-agency cooperation and collaboration

As the lists of cooperating groups indicate, a number of programs and projects represent collaborative efforts between agencies and organizations, voluntary and public, professional and lay. Respondents tend to put great weight on the quality of cooperation achieved, giving full cooperation a large share of credit for effectiveness and giving lack of cooperation a large share of blame for ineffectiveness of a program. This is a point on which respondents in the experience survey also spoke with great feeling, warning that only by achieving "a true community of agencies" can a substantially larger number of children find the families they need.

Shortages of funds and staff

Most efforts to increase the number of adoptive placements suffer from limitations of funds and staff. Sometimes the limitations are very serious, especially for the voluntary agencies. All of the voluntary agencies interviewed testified that they do not have, and will not be able to obtain from voluntary contributions, the financial resources required to meet the total need for placements of black children. Nor can local taxing bodies meet the total costs. There is general agreement that additional state and greatly increased levels of federal funding are required.

The various patterns of inter-agency cooperation represent efforts to make the most of available professional and financial resources. At the same time, cooperation between public and voluntary agencies increases the potential for sharing and utilization of information about children needing placement and families who would like to adopt them.

The line between public and voluntary has become blurred, as public agencies increasingly purchase services from voluntary agencies. However, public agencies are usually in a position to draw upon broader financial resources than are available to voluntary agencies.

Ideally, the financial resources of voluntary agencies should be supplemented by public funds, while public agencies should be able to draw upon the skills, experience, and community resources available through voluntary agencies.

The growing utilization of subsidized adoptions underlines and enlarges the need for public funding in order to increase the number of black couples adopting children and the number of black children placed in adoption. So far, 13 states have approved legislation permitting subsidized adoptions, and the number seems likely to increase--although in the experience survey, some feeling was expressed that so far the resource

has not been fully utilized (p. 45).

Shortage of funds and shortage of staff are, to a considerable extent, inter-related problems--since increase of funds means increase in the potential for employing additional staff. However, modifications of procedures and practices can on occasion increase the accomplishment of currently available staff. For example, as noted in the earlier report (p. 20), one agency found that by speeding up the adoption process, and thus reducing the amount of time children spent in foster care, "many thousands of dollars" were saved in one year. This kind of saving would by no means eliminate the need for public funding, but it would make available resources go further.

Public information

Efforts to inform the public about the magnitude and urgency of the need are important components of most of the programs reviewed here. Among the various means employed, the mass media are the most prominent, especially television. It is generally assumed that mass media campaigns are necessary and helpful, but that for maximum effectiveness they must be backed up by more direct person-to-person contacts. One agency reports deliberately halting media appeals because inquiries were exceeding the ability of staff to respond promptly. Respondents in the experience survey also emphasized the importance of tailoring media campaigns to the coping power of available staff or else increasing staff to meet the demand.

Some concern is expressed about showing on television children who are in need of placement. Few doubt that this kind of appeal is effective, but some think it is harmful for children who have passed infancy to realize that they are being exhibited in this way. A solution used by some is to show pictures of children playing together, rather than individual close-ups. A few agencies, however, take a stand against displaying the children on television, "like goods in a store".

Agency policies and practices

Inevitably, a good deal of comment centered on various aspects of agency policies and practices. A striking feature of the interviews is the frequency with which the programs described here have been developing practices similar to those recommended by respondents in the experience survey. Some of the most salient intra-agency features are noted below. To a large extent they also confirm impressions conveyed by other reports,

such as those of the Child Welfare League of America.*

Flexibility and focus. Two major changes that have long been advocated appear to be in process, according to our respondents. One is the shift in focus "from screening applicants out to screening them in"--a phrase that recurs with impressive frequency. The attempt is to help people become good adoptive parents rather than to eliminate the ones that seem less promising, "to enable rather than to brush off".

An accompanying change--mentioned by all the agencies and conspicuous in the experience survey--is the greater flexibility of agency procedures and requirements, representing an effort to meet the convenience of the applicants rather than the rules of the agency. Income and age restrictions are relaxed; appointments are scheduled outside of official agency hours and agency offices; applicants are helped with filling out forms, if necessary; mothers are permitted to continue outside employment if they have a good child care plan, etc. The increase in flexibility and relaxation in specific requirements were initiated for the sake of black clients. But in some instances they have been extended to white clients also. Applying the same rules to both white and black helps to satisfy a sense of fairness and also to answer some earlier accusations of "a double standard" for whites and for blacks. More important, however, it was found that the modified regulations were as sound for white children as for black.

Evidences of these changes have been reported in a number of studies, though seldom as unanimously as in the programs reviewed here.**

Reports of increasing, and recommendations for more, flexibility are regularly accompanied by the proviso that cutting down on non-essentials must be linked with continued concern about the essentials that are important for ensuring the welfare of the child to the greatest extent possible.

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* Grow, Lucille J., A New Look at Supply and Demand in Adoption. New York, N. Y.: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1970, 15 pp.; Riday, Edwin, Supply and Demand in Adoption. New York, N. Y.: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., July 1969, 21 pp.

** Braden, Josephine A., "Adoption in a Changing World", Social Casework 51:8:486-490, October 1970; Grow, op. cit.; Riday, op. cit.; Mondloh, Raymond, "Changing Practice in the Adoptive Home Study", Child Welfare 48:3:148-156, March 1969; Fellner, Irving W., "Recruiting Adoptive Applicants", Social Work 13:1:92-100, January 1968; Gallagher, Ursula M., Problems and Progress in Adoption, presented at symposium on The Problems in Adoption, January 27-29, 1968, San Francisco, California. Available from Children's Bureau, Office of Child Development, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1968, 8 pp.

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Decentralization. One aspect of increasing applicant-centeredness is the opening of district or neighborhood offices, both to suit the convenience of potential applicants and to make the program community-based. In all the instances reported, such offices are headed by a black director or supervisor and located in a black community. The respondents indicate that the location of the office in itself does not produce results, although it may reduce the geographical and psychological distance of the agency from the black community. What really affects the results, they say, is the degree of involvement of the black community, which the location of the office can facilitate but not determine.

Staff involvement and characteristics. The more enthusiastic reports of program effectiveness tend to be linked with descriptions of strong efforts to involve all agency staff, so that even the staff members not directly participating in the recruitment program are aware of it and interested in it.

Workshops for staff are described repeatedly, with emphasis on the need of staff training for both black and white staff members. Such workshops are used (1) to recognize and relate to the new surge of pride in the black community and the impetus and drive to be involved and take responsibility for things which affect their lives; (2) to increase understanding of "black experience", black life styles, what parenting means in the black community, attitudes of blacks toward "the establishment" and toward social agencies as part of the establishment; (3) to clarify and cope with attitudes of middle-class agency staff--black and white--toward other groups and toward inter-group relations. Some of the workshops and institutes are followed up by individual interviews with staff members. A similar linkage between staff development and reports of program success was found in the experience survey reported earlier. In some instances, lack of program or project success was attributed to lack of work with staff and consequent lack of staff interest and cooperation.

Among the agencies visited there was total agreement that it is not necessary to have only black social workers for serving black applicants. It was further agreed that black social workers and supervisors should be integrated within the total staff. On the other hand, the prevailing opinion is that black staff should be used in launching promotional and educational programs.

The unanimity concerning use of both black and white staff contrasts with the divided opinions expressed in the experience survey (p. 31).

Fees. A great many agencies have modified their requirements with regard to fees, in order that no child should be deprived of an adoptive home because the parents are not in a position to pay a substantial fee. Nevertheless, voluntary agencies are in a difficult position with regard to fees. In many places, the agencies are expected to be at least partially self-supporting, and continued financial help from the community

generally depends on their carrying some portion of their own expenses. They are therefore not in a position to eliminate the fee for couples who could easily afford to pay one. At the same time, they are troubled by the idea of a "double standard".

Fee levels were set at a time when the typical adoption placement was with a middle-income white family, well able to pay for the service involved in the adoption process. Voluntary agencies came to regard these fees as an appropriate source of partial support, and to depend on them for maintaining quality services. The present effort to extend adoption services to families less able to pay substantial fees means that there is more for the agencies to do and less to do it with--a situation obviously related to the need for more adequate public funding mentioned earlier.

Time and cost of placement. Since the basis and methods of arriving at estimates vary widely, it is not possible to arrive at a meaningful average for the total cost of placing a child or the length of time required by the process. It is clear that many agencies have substantially reduced the time period from application to completion of a legal adoption. It is clear also that reducing the time period may substantially reduce the cost.

Supply and demand

Strangely enough, although so many black children need adoptive placement, some agencies complain that they do not have black children to place. Yet they say that there are children in foster care who might be released for adoption.

To some extent the discrepancies between supply and demand relate to geographical location. Some cities or regions have more applicants than children, while others have more children than applicants. Clearly, more effective mechanisms are needed in order to bring together the families who wish to adopt and the children who need adoptive placement. Clearly also, more effort must be made to clear away the legal obstacles that prevent placement of children who need it. Several agencies reported long delays in court procedures caused by crowded calendars and the reluctance of judges to terminate parental rights.

Economic conditions

While the current upsurge of black consciousness and confidence is seen as favorable to increased recruitment of black adoptive parents, the current decline in employment, coupled with apprehension about the eco-economic situation just ahead, clearly operates as a deterrent. Some respondents say that the black community is preoccupied just now with immediate subsistence problems, so that people are not free to become actively concerned with the need for more adoptive homes, and many are

not in a position to take responsibility for an additional child. In the experience survey also, respondents emphasized economic problems and apprehensions as deterrents to adoption.

Comparisons with experience survey opinions

Despite a few cross-references, no effort has been made to compare opinions expressed in this supplement with those expressed earlier in the experience survey. For the most part, the programs described in this report are in accord with recommendations made by the various groups of informed people who contributed to the survey. The chief contrast, mentioned above, has to do with the virtually unanimous opinion expressed here that black clients need not necessarily be served by black social workers--as compared with mixed opinions reported earlier. The difference is the more noteworthy since all of the present respondents are engaged in relevant programs, whereas many of those in the experience survey--despite relevant experience--were not. Apparently assumptions about the need for black social workers to work with black clients are not necessarily in line with actual observations.

A second difference is that the experience survey reported strong disapproval of trans-racial adoptions, while the agencies represented here reflect general acceptance of them.

Essential ingredients

Both reports convey the same basic message, which is reinforced by analogous reports dating back to the early fifties and beyond: that many more families can be found for children who need them, if certain essential ingredients are included in the effort. According to our respondents these ingredients include:

1. Giving visibility to the need
2. Attacking the problem with vigor, conviction, and know-how
3. Coordinating the activities and resources of diverse groups and organizations
4. Sustaining the effort consistently as long as the need remains
5. Adapting policies, procedures, and general approach to the target audience rather than to the preconceptions and preferences of administrators and professional staff
6. Providing back-up service and sufficient staff to serve the increased number of applicants responding to recruitment appeals.

Despite the analogies, however, there is reason to believe that some new factors are present which may result in more sustained efforts and more substantial results than before. This belief is not merely a hope. Rather, it is a determination on the part of those--within and outside of the Government--who are committed to serving children in need of families.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ADOPTIONS
2500 West Olympia Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90006

Duration: 1949 - continuing. (See Purpose)

Auspices: Public.

Purpose: The Department was established in 1949 to provide services to natural parents who were unable to obtain help in finding adoptive homes for their children and to provide homes for children with "special needs", who at that time were in boarding homes and institutions because of a lack of adoption services. Children with special needs were defined as those of minority or mixed racial background, older children, and those with mental or physical handicaps. Since the agency no longer has any problem in placing healthy black or biracial infants and young children, the staff is now concentrating on finding homes for the older children and those with physical and mental handicaps. The emphasis has been on children in foster family care and, of the older children, it seems that the boys are somewhat more difficult to place.

Staff Involved: Since this is an ongoing Department program, all staff in each of the five district offices are involved. This includes a fully integrated staff of 165 professional workers, 29 supervisors, one public health nurse in each of the five offices, and a full-time public relations person. (The Director of one district office and one Assistant District Director are black, as are the Director of Training and a number of black casework supervisors.) Also, the County Attorney's Office provides legal services to the Department.

Methods.

Community involvement. Three of the five district offices have developed an auxiliary of volunteers from the community people who participate in recruitment and publicity activities. Adoptive parents also assist in recruitment.

Publicity. The Department feels that a strong public relations program is essential. An ongoing publicity program, consisting of newspaper articles and radio and television programs, includes a popular television program which is on the air for 15 minutes every week. During this time, children available for adoption are shown with their caseworkers or sometimes with their foster parents. The show's host, whose efforts are directed to attracting applicants for children with special needs, knows a great deal about the Department's program, policies, and eligibility requirements and discusses these items as the children are shown. This show has been televised for three years and over 300 of the Department's placements during that time are attributed to it.

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There is general agreement among staff that when infants and young children are "made visible" they sell themselves. Initially, since there was a fear that showing an older child live would be threatening to him, groups of older children were shown on film in their foster homes, playing in the park, etc. When it was found that the children enjoyed seeing themselves on television and did not suffer any ill effects, the Department decided to begin showing certain children live. Children selected are those who are fully prepared to move into adoption and understand that they are going on television to let people know what kinds of children the Department has. Care is taken to keep a child from feeling that he is appearing personally to see if a particular family would want him. Children are interviewed about their interests, etc. and viewer response has been good.

Each year, prior to Mother's Day and Father's Day, the Department's lay Advisory Commission selects the Adoptive Mother and Adoptive Father of the Year from nominations made by the district offices. A plaque is presented at the Department's main office by one of the County Commissioners, with representatives of newspapers and television networks in attendance. This serves to publicize the program and also to keep the County Commissioners in touch with the Department.

Since each of the district offices is free to develop its own methods of publicizing the program in the community and recruiting adoptive applicants, a number of varied approaches have been tried. One of the offices, situated in a black community, has developed a summer project in a park located across the street from their offices. Agency staff and volunteers carry out an activity program for the children under their care, and adoptive applicants are invited to observe. This same office places a "Sugar Plum Tree" in the lobby of a large department store in the area's shopping district during the Christmas season. Disks with the pseudo name of each child and a list of the things he wants for Christmas are hung on the tree and shoppers may select a name, purchase a gift, and take it to the district office.

Other recruitment activities carried out by different offices include fashion shows, in which children act as models and applicants are able to see them, parties for prospective applicants in the homes of adoptive parents, etc.

"Reaching out to the community brings results and one satisfied applicant brings in others." The Department's image in the community has improved and there isn't any feeling of the public agency being inferior to the voluntary agencies.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. Since the Department believes that both black and white staff should be able to deal with all applicants, a series of group training sessions has been instituted to help black and white workers understand their feelings about "the black experience" and how these attitudes affect their ability to work with black applicants.

Some of the black workers established a committee to determine, from their own knowledge and experiences, those factors that influence life styles within the black community and attitudes towards whites and "the establishment".

Eligibility requirements were originally relaxed for black families, but the more lenient standards now apply to all applicants. If adoptive mothers have a good child care plan, they are no longer asked to give up their jobs. Also deleted from the list of requirements are a marriage of three years duration, proof of infertility, rigid age limitations, and limitations on the number of children in a family. The average length of time between application and placement of children with special needs now ranges from six weeks to three or four months.

Group meetings are voluntary for all applicants and it has been found that black applicants participate in the same proportion as whites. However, if blacks don't wish to attend, their application is assigned to a worker the next day and, in the case of a telephone call, the assignment is made the same day. Applicants are seen first in an office visit, during which the worker helps with the application form, if this is requested. Appointments may be made for evening and weekend visits.

Trans-racial placements have been made, although it is felt that children are better off with families similar to themselves, if such homes can be found. Twenty-four black children were adopted by white families in the first half of FY 1970, as compared to the same number for all of 1969, and two white children have been placed with a black family.

The Department began placing with single parents in 1965 in order to widen the opportunities for adoption of children with special needs. However, the publicity on this program brought so many applications from two-parent families that the use of single applicants was largely limited to the adoption of black children. Also, the subsidy program has decreased the need to place children with single parents. It is felt that both single-parent and trans-racial placements are alternatives, and that neither is a first choice.

Three years ago, the Department opened a sub-office to one of its district offices in a black community in order to decrease the psychological and emotional distance between itself and this community, and to help staff increase their understanding of the black culture and sociology. The success of this office has helped in the increasing placements of black children.

Inter-agency efforts. Through a State Adoption Exchange, developed by the California State Department of Social Welfare, a computer is used to match children and adoptive applicants on a statewide basis. The Department also registers its children with ARENA (Adoption Resource Exchange of North America).

The close working relationship between California's public and voluntary agencies is helpful. The California Association of Adoption Agencies, composed of public and voluntary agencies from all over the State, focuses its energies in the legislative field, proposing new laws to strengthen adoption services and opposing ill-advised legislation. In Los Angeles County, executives of public and voluntary adoption agencies and maternity homes meet monthly to discuss mutual problems and cooperative efforts. And in southern California, a joint agency matching conference meets bi-monthly to find homes for children with special needs.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

The fear of unemployment may have an adverse effect on the number of black families applying for adoption. The Department serves a number of servicemen and they are sometimes transferred after the child has been placed in the home, but before the end of the waiting period for the adoption decree. The Department tries, but has sometimes had problems in getting the court in the family's new location to give the final decree. Some states won't accept the Department's relinquishment without notifying the natural mother and, in other jurisdictions, residency is a requirement. To avoid this problem, these families appear in the local court before leaving the county for a "prior hearing". At the end of the trial period, the judge, on the basis of the Department's report, will grant a final decree without the family having to appear again.

Applicants from other California counties and from other states who apply to the Los Angeles Department are referred to agencies in their own state or area, but the latter often don't follow up the applications. There is difficulty in freeing abandoned children for adoption, particularly older children who are abandoned in foster care.

Part of a worker's performance rating is based on her having completed a certain number of applicant studies within a specified time, and many complain that black applications require more time to complete because of the difficulty in getting verifications on marriages, divorces, etc. This is particularly true if the information must be secured from some southern states. Although the use of subsidy has greatly increased the number of black children placed, it is felt that there is a need for other resources and supports in the community, such as assistance in legally terminating a prior marriage.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: "Sole custody action" has facilitated adoption for some children. A married woman who has an out-of-wedlock child can, through court action, secure sole custody of the child if she can show that she did not cohabit with the husband during the period of conception. Her husband's consent is not required for adoption of the child.

A recent California law extends eligibility for crippled children's services to eligible children after their adoption, regardless of the financial status of the adoptive family. This has facilitated the placement of all children with serious medical problems.

California's adoption subsidy--a two year pilot program--has been in effect since March of 1969. Its purpose is to promote the adoptive placement of children who are difficult to place due to "their ethnic background, race, color, language, age, or physical, mental, emotional, or medical handicaps" by providing financial aid to potential adoptive parents. To qualify for this aid, the couple must adopt a "hard-to-place" child, and the relation of their expenses and income must be such that they can't take on the child's support. Also, this financial situation must be temporary, because assistance can only be given for a three-year period, and the amount of the subsidy must be no more than what would be paid for foster care. Although the legislation was primarily intended to increase the number of adoptions in lower income families, it has also been given--again, on a temporary basis--to eligible families who don't fall into this income category. It is generally agreed that the subsidy has greatly increased the number of black children placed and the number of black couples adopting them, and legislation has been passed to make the program permanent.

The cooperation between the public and voluntary adoption agencies aids in furthering the adoption of all children and sustained, organized citizen interest, support, and participation is a necessity in a program of this sort.

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--Based on a sliding scale up to $500.00 (no fee is the adoption is to be subsidized).*

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--Ranges from $50.00 to $250.00.

* A substantial part of the agency budget comes from these fees.

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CHICAGO CHILD CARE SOCIETY
546 South University
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Duration: Since the early 1950's an emphasis on the adoption of black children has been part of the Society's ongoing program; biracial children are second in priority and white are third.

Auspices: Voluntary.

Purpose: Primarily, to find adoptive homes for black children and those of mixed-racial parentage--the "children with special needs". The Society's philosophy is that "every child deserves a chance for a permanent home; a home of his own to be reared in and loved". The purpose of the program is to serve the child, not to serve adoptive applicants by placing a child at their request.

Staff Involved: The Supervisor of the Adoption Unit and the Director of Foster Care and Adoption are responsible for the program. Other staff include six M.S.W.'s and one social work assistant (one male and six females; two white and five black). There are two vacant positions presently. The Society has its own preventive medical service program, the staff of which includes a part-time pediatrician, one registered nurse, and psychiatric consultants. The services of an attorney are also available.

A "high-powered" advertising firm, which has contacts with several magazines, has been available to the program.

Methods:

Community involvement. Community people are involved in the program through groups such as foster parent clubs, the Society's Board of Directors, auxiliaries, the Open Door Society, and adoptive parents' groups.

Publicity. Mass media publicity on a continuous basis is most effective in relating the need for adoptive homes to the public. In addition to participating in the Adoption Information Service's mass media campaign, the Society developed its own efforts including spot announcements on television, radio announcements, and newspaper ads. Rented films were shown to community groups.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. For the convenience of the community, the Society has opened recruitment offices in two areas--Evanston and Harvey. If a resident decides to apply, the study process can continue at the office where application was made or at the main office.

The Society has streamlined the study process by having workers and applicants focus on how husband and wife have functioned within the family, marital relationships, job functioning and satisfactions, commitment to adoption, problem areas, and risks involved. Psychiatric consultation is available when needed and wanted. The study can be completed in from two intensive interviews to six interviews, and the worker is then free to make her own decision, in cooperation with the applicants, as to whether or when they are ready for adoption. If there is a marginal case or the worker has doubts, a small group interview with four staff members may be arranged with the applicants. The average length of time between application and placement is now two to three months and the increase in placements since 1967 is due primarily to the streamlining of the study process.

There are now more flexible eligibility requirements in terms of length of marriage, acceptance of the working mother, age of applicants, and number of children in the family. (The 16 agencies participating in the Adoption Information Service studied their various eligibility requirements and accepted the increased flexibility.) Also, matching is no longer a major issue.

Twenty children have been placed on a subsidy basis between 1966 and September 1970. The Society's experience in this field served as a basis for passage of legislation allowing use of public funds for subsidy in Illinois and in several other states.

The Society has been placing Indian and Oriental children in white families for 15 years and, in 1965, they began placing black children with these families.

In single-parent adoptions, which the Society began to look at in early 1968, consideration is given to applicant's maturity, ability to care for herself and the child, plans for child care on a permanent basis, extended family situation, etc. The first placement of this type was made in 1969.

Inter-agency efforts. The Society cooperates with member agencies of the Adoption Information Service who see the need for families for black and biracial children as a community problem and thus, share information on potential homes, available children, workable procedures, etc. Through the efforts of these agencies, the Illinois State Adoption Exchange, and a Child Care Association of Illinois project, efforts will be made to place Chicago children in downstate Illinois homes. Applicants are also referred from the Open Door Society, an organized group of adoptive parents interested in transracial adoption.

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Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Getting financial support for children in foster family care is a problem for voluntary agencies. The State assumes guardianship for all children in voluntary agencies where there is a purchase-of-care agreement for the funding of foster care.

Locating parents, scheduling court hearings, and terminating parental rights sometimes causes delays in placement. A sub-committee has been established within the Adoption Information Service to identify problems indigenous to the Court and find solutions to them. Each agency was asked to submit documented evidence to the subcommittee of actual problems encountered and the number of children involved.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: Cooperation with other agencies in the adoption field has played a large part in the success of the Society's program, as has the operation of the Illinois State Adoption Exchange and the Adoption Information Service. Mass media publicity has been helpful in educating the public as to the need for adoptive homes.

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--None.

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--Cost of the lawyer of their choice.*

* When it is impossible for a family to pay the legal costs of adoption, the agency will sometimes assume this obligation.

ILLINOIS CHILDREN'S HOME AND AID SOCIETY
1122 North Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60610

Program or Project: "Homes Now"

Duration: August 1968 - continuing.

Auspices: Voluntary. (Funded through foundation grants and Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, which pays salaries for three additional staff members needed for project.)

Cooperating Groups: (formerly) Adoption Information Service.

Purpose: To explore and refine methods for accelerating adoptive placements of black and biracial children; more specifically, to determine among other things, whether the race of the worker makes a difference in talking with black families, what types of publicity would best teach these families, and whether an office in the black community would be helpful in recruitment. "Homes Now" began as a project but has since been permanently incorporated into the Society's program.

Staff Involved: Six black staff members in the south side office are specifically assigned to the project: two case workers, two community organizers, one publicity person, and one secretary. Additional staff, both black and white, include 25 caseworkers and paraprofessionals in the Adoption Services Division of I.C.H. & A.

A part-time public relations consultant was hired during part of the first project year to develop the planned use of news media and to outline publicity material.

The agency's Board has been involved in and supportive of the project from the beginning--"Administrative backing is crucial." Volunteer groups have also been helpful.

Methods:

Community involvement. Community leaders were contacted personally and asked to participate in the project. Although attendance was small at a meeting arranged by staff with local ministers, merchants, and civic leaders, the merchants accepted publicity materials and are displaying posters.

A small group of black adoptive parents, known as "The Committee for the Adoption of Black Babies", has aided in the recruitment program. Efforts to increase the number of parents in this group have failed and thus, due to its size, the Committee is limited in its effectiveness.

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Also, an auxiliary group of I.C.H. & A. helped by furnishing and planning the opening of the south side office. They also help to distribute posters and plan ways to involve the community more deeply in recruitment efforts.

Publicity. The local press has been cooperative in carrying special features and articles on adoption.

Publicity materials were displayed in booths at three church fund-raising activities and an affair given by the NAACP. (Auxiliary members set up and manned the booths.) At a booth manned by one male and one female community organizer at a big trade fair in Chicago, it was explained that industry could cooperate with the agency in finding families for black children by displaying materials, putting stuffers in envelopes, etc.

Several churches have distributed pamphlets and displayed posters and, although some ministers have been interested, results have been minimal. Flyers distributed at "Operation Breadbasket" had little result, probably because no verbal presentation was possible at the time. Direct attempts to reach out to stable, lower income black families through churches, local leaders, etc., elicited only a few referrals.

Direct personal contact with industry, hospitals, and businesses where a large number of blacks were employed produced considerable interest, many increased referrals, and publicity in their local "house organs". Posters were displayed in many of these establishments and many employers agreed to distribute brochures with pay envelopes. Hospitals have distributed materials and put items about the need for homes in their staff papers. The response has been "good" and several babies have been placed. Also, the Cook County Department of Public Aid posted materials for their employees and response has been positive. Lately, the two community organizers have been conducting a house-to-house canvass in the immediate area of the district office.

It was found that during the period of regular television exposure and newspaper coverage, response was "enthusiastic", with phone inquiries and drop-in requests coming at a rather even pace. When mass publicity was curtailed, inquiries began to decline and by mid-May of 1970, "the number of requests for black children had dropped sharply". Since then, "the response has been less.... So far, mass publicity through radio, TV, and newspapers has produced the greatest number of inquiries and applications." However, the agency still receives four times more inquiries from black families than before the project started.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. In order to serve the convenience of the black community and to make the project community-based, a district office was set up on the south side of Chicago. Reactions differed at first--some thought this was segregation and racism, and

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others felt it was a concrete expression of interest and intention to serve the black community. But the members of the committees connected with the project, who were originally opposed to the office, are now holding their meetings there.

Total staff is involved in the project and meetings are held in which project staff report on progress and problems, and receive suggestions from others in the division. Every attempt has been made to prevent the project from becoming a segregated program for black children and applicants. A specific attempt was made to deal with staff attitudes through meetings and interviews with the Director in which race was openly discussed.

One of the steps taken to attempt to reduce the number of black applicants who drop out after their first contact with the agency has been a streamlining of the study process. Previously, group orientation was offered to adoptive applicants, during which adoption procedures, eligibility requirements, etc. were discussed, and application forms were distributed. If and when a couple returned the form, an individual interview was scheduled. Now, when black couples apply, individual interviews are arranged immediately if they have come to the agency, and, if they have telephoned, as soon as is convenient for them. Group interviews are planned only if applicants can attend a meeting within a period of two weeks. Also, if applicants are seen initially at the south side office, interviews may continue there or at the main office, depending on their preference. The length of time from application to placement now varies from one to three months, unless the family requests a delay in placement.

The study process itself is shorter and more flexible and is viewed as an "enabling process", i.e., it focuses on helping the applicants to secure a child. All staff have been trained in the use of this approach. The interviews are designed to help the applicants to evaluate their reasons for wanting to adopt a child and their ability to become parents. Thus, the agency's judgmental stance is reduced. Also, eligibility requirements are more flexible and related to the needs of the child. The use of the enabling approach and the flexibility in requirements is also affecting the study process with white applicants although, as to requirements, it is recognized that there is a "double standard based on reality factors--the lack of homes for black children". Thus, the agency would probably not subsidize a white applicant for a healthy infant; nor would a single-parent request for the placement of a white child have a very high priority.

By eliminating the requirement for medical statements, the agency is placing less emphasis on sterility. If this is a problem for a couple, an attempt is made to resolve it through discussion.

As to different approaches to adoption, the agency has made five single-parent placements of black children, all with females. Two white single applicants are interested in black children and are being studied in depth. Subsidy has been provided for 15 or 20 adoptive parents, although some young black couples who were offered subsidies refused them. Foster parents account for three or four placements a year.

Inter-agency efforts. The agency works closely with the Open Door Society, an independent group of parents who have adopted children across racial lines and are actively promoting trans-racial adoptions. Couples who become interested in adopting trans-racially through the O.D.S.'s publicity, community meetings, etc., are referred to I.C.H & A. The agency was also involved with the Illinois Adoption Information Service.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

The black community is so involved in seeking solutions to problems of education, housing, and employment, that adoption has a lower priority. Thus, the agency is seeking involvement with active black groups in order to encourage more interest in adoption.

An anticipated increase in applicants has not occurred, perhaps due to the present employment situation.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: A reorganization of the program and personnel of the Adoption Division and the new approach to adoptions within the agency have played an important part in the program's success. "The new source of pride and independence in the black community itself" is also an important factor.

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--$0 - $1,200.

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--$53.00 in court costs if agency fee is waived or reduced.

ILLINOIS STATE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
1026 South Damen Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60612

Duration: 1965 - continuing.

Auspices: Public.

Purpose: To increase the number of black children placed in adoptive families. The Department--a public agency--was set up only to fill in the gaps in services for children and was never meant to take over the full adoption program. Voluntary agencies have been carrying the load in the Metropolitan Chicago Area and white children are referred to them.

Staff Involved: The Section Supervisor of Adoptions and the Chicago District Office's Adoption Supervisor are directly responsible for the program. Other staff include the District Office's Children's Division and four home finders.

Methods:

Publicity. The Department has not developed a recruitment program, but plans to do so. It is felt that mass media should be used to educate the community as to the need for adoption and also to get across that "adoption is the right of the child and not the adoptive parent". This is the first step in recruiting specific couples. Also, it is necessary to identify what children are in need of adoption. The general public thinks there are many children waiting to be adopted and this is true of black children, older children, and others with special needs. However, it is not the case with white children, for whom there are more applicants than there are children waiting to be adopted. The public should also learn about present agency eligibility requirements and the concept of "middle-class" adoptions must be dispelled.

Showing children on television or putting their pictures in newspapers is thought to bring more responses, because people can identify with the children or develop interest in a specific child. This should, however, be done in such a way that the children are not "advertised". This can be a "demeaning experience for the child. Here is something nobody wants." Publicity should emphasize the rewarding aspects of adoption. The adoptive parents and their child should be shown in their home, not in the agency office or a studio. "Adoptive parents are the major and best source of recruitment."

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. A training program for total staff has been developed in order to clarify, among other things, the question of "what is an adoptable child?" There were misconceptions that children with physical and mental problems, older children, and the

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majority of black children were not adoptable. Also, the concern about matching has been disspelled. The length of time from application to placement ranges from six weeks to three months.

It is now determined, at intake, which foster home applicants may be interested in adoption. Children who may go into adoption are placed in these homes, with the knowledge of the foster parents. Adoption proceeds to the planning stages for each child. A "continual push" is required so that children don't "get lost". When a child has been in a foster home for a long time and he and the family are well adjusted, subsidy is offered if the family is unable to handle adoption financially. The majority of subsidized adoptions are foster family adoptions.

Although the State law refers to meeting the parents' religious preference whenever practical, the Department hasn't found this to be a problem, but does try to fulfill specific requests by a parent. Sectarian agencies have found this to be something of a problem, but they are now overcoming it by being more flexible and de-emphasizing religion in the study process.

Inter-agency efforts. In order to meet the goal of increasing statewide adoptions by 400 children above the 12,000 placed during 1969, the Department is now paying administrative costs to cover added staff, clinic costs, etc., in addition to the usual amount per child paid to each agency for foster care for those children for whom adoption is planned. All children for whom administrative costs are paid must be wards of the State agency and must be in addition to the number placed by the agency the previous year.

The Department has a working arrangement with the Open Door Society for referrals of adoptive applicants. They also work closely with the Adoption Information Service. Children are referred from within the agency and from other agencies.

A contract with the Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota calls for the trans-racial placement of 40 black children from Chicago with adoptive families in Minnesota. The Department will pay $135.00 monthly per child for foster care, plus administrative costs, and these children will become a part of their program. The Minnesota agency will report to the Department at least every six months on each child until adoption is completed and, at the end of the year, the Department will do a careful survey of those children not yet placed and request return of a child if they have a home for him. The Department has a similar contract with the Chicago Child Care Association for placement of 20 black children above the number placed the previous year.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

The Department has only about one third of the staff necessary to implement the program properly.

Medical care and consultation are inadequate, especially consultation regarding genetics in cases of incestuous relationships.

Attorney's fees are a hardship for some black applicants, but efforts are made to secure help such as legal aid for those who are eligible.

Since the Department, which is providing statewide leadership, does not charge a fee for adoption, it is placed in the position of undercutting the voluntary agencies, the majority of whom do require a fee.

Many agencies--particularly the voluntary agencies--fear that they will be unable to find adoptive homes for black children and there is a consequent lack of administrative conviction and leadership to move in this direction. In the case of a black baby, unlike that of a white child, the agency must seek out adoptive applicants and there is a fear of not finding a home. Another problem for voluntary agencies is the cost of keeping a child in foster care until an adoptive family can be found. With the exception of four or five, the 16 voluntary agencies participating in the Adoption Information Service have depended solely on referrals from this source to find adoptive homes for black children. The agencies must do more of their own recruiting.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: An organized structure for cooperation of all adoption agencies, such as the Adoption Information Service of Illinois, is very helpful in finding homes.

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--None.

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--Attorney's fee.

ILLINOIS STATE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
1026 South Damen Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60612

Program or Project: Adoption Information Service

Auspices: Public.

Cooperating Groups: 16 public and voluntary agencies with responsibility for adoptive placements.

Purpose: To provide a long-range and continuous educational and publicity program designed to inform the community about adoption and stimulate applications from those couples who wish to adopt; to offer information and consultation on available community resources to couples interested in adoption; to provide a central referral service to the 16 participating agencies in the Chicago metropolitan area; to work with adoption personnel to define, clarify, and improve adoption practices; to develop an adoption resource exchange in Illinois for inter-agency and interstate cooperation in locating suitable homes for children who might not be placed through individual agency efforts. (A.I.S. is now being evaluated and its purpose and focus may change.)

Staff Involved: The A.I.S. coordinator, her secretary, and the staff members of participating agencies are responsible for the Service's operation. The public relations officer in the State Office works closely with the coordinator and now, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, there are plans to hire a full-time public relations person as part of the permanent staff.

Methods:

Community involvement. A Citizens Advisory Committee was formed as an "essential" part of the community education process. It consists of 70 members including public relations personnel, television and radio commentators and producers, ministers, lawyers, doctors, labor union members, persons in the business community, agency board members, and citizens. The purpose of the Committee is "to help the professional staff of A.I.S. keep the community informed regarding the need for adoption. Primary emphasis is on the crucial need for homes for minority group children."

Publicity. Mass publicity on a continuous basis is necessary to inform the community about the need for adoptive families and to educate them on the policies and practices of adoption agencies.

Television and radio spot announcements are broadcast, as well as two weekly adoption series on two different channels. The Governor of Illinois participated in the first televised press conference on adoptions

in 1963. Television has been the largest source of A.I.S. referrals on a continuing basis.

News releases and feature articles on adoption were carried in dailies and in neighborhood and industrial newsletters. Articles on adoption were also carried by United Press International and distributed to all local metropolitan and suburban newspapers. Films on adoption were shown to community groups and agency boards.

Brochures were distributed to agencies, doctors, hospitals, and persons requesting information on adoption. Also, cards and posters were displayed in offices and on various public transportation facilities.

A.I.S. is listed twice in the Chicago telephone directory and also in the Yellow Pages. These listings ranked as the second largest source of referrals to the Service.

"Through the publicity program, especially television shows, the community became more aware of the need for adoption, and there was better understanding of eligibility requirements. As a result there has been a steady increase in the number of couples inquiring about adoption and in the number referred to participating agencies by A.I.S."

Inter-agency efforts. Monthly meetings were held with participating agencies to study, analyze, evaluate, and recommend changes in policy and to improve procedures and adoption practice. One result of this was a more uniform set of eligibility requirements for adoptive parents among the various agencies. Sub-committees have worked on cooperative placements, intake procedures, and the home study process, and the result has been more uniform and flexible policies in these areas also.

Agencies share information on children with "special needs" and homes available for placements. A.I.S. participants developed the Illinois State Adoption Exchange, which is now operated by the State Office in Springfield.

The agencies helped to coordinate television shows and some staff participated in them by appearing on programs and showing children available for adoption.

These efforts have led to greater understanding, trust, confidence, and respect between the agencies. There is also a greater willingness to work together toward the common goal of finding families for black children and others released for adoption. In addition, agencies have been more willing to experiment with innovations such as single-parent, subsidized, trans-racial, and foster-parent adoptions.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Initially there was a problem in getting agencies to coordinate their efforts in the publicity campaign, due perhaps to their reluctance to show children awaiting adoption and adoptive parents on television and in newspapers. After couples responding mentioned specific children or pictures they had seen, and after much discussion and policy changing within the agencies, resistance was gradually overcome. Some agencies, however, still seem troubled over what publicity may eventually mean to a child and his adoptive parents.

Not all 16 participating agencies placed the black children referred to them and only four of the agencies developed a continuous recruitment project of their own. However, many agencies which didn't place black children prior to the program, have done so with the children referred by A.I.S., in spite of the fact that they haven't pursued vigorous recruitment efforts of their own.

Although agency supervisors attended A.I.S. meetings, it would be desirable for more administrators to attend. Specific attention is being given to this problem in A.I.S.'s re-evaluation and a plan requiring the attendance of administrators of participating agencies is being suggested.

LUTHERAN CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
7620 Madison Street
River Forest, Illinois 60305

Program or Project: Families for All

Duration: 1969 - continuing.

Auspices: Voluntary.

Purpose: In response to the agency's Board's directive to greatly increase agency services which meet priority needs, especially those of the black and biracial child needing adoptive placement, an active program was begun to recruit adoptive applicants. The effort is city-wide with a special concentration in western suburban areas of Chicago where other agencies have not yet been active in recruitment. An attempt is made to stimulate awareness of the need for adoptive families for black children. Because there are 25 applicants for every white child available for adoption, many think the same situation exists for the black child.

Staff Involved: The supervisor in the main office provides leadership to the recruitment program. Others responsible for the program are: four staff members from the main office's adoption unit; a social worker, a community worker, and a receptionist, all of whom are black and located in the black section's branch office; and a black receptionist in a downtown office.

Although black staff carry major responsibility for the promotional work, adoption staff members are involved in the study of applicants, placement of children, and services to the family after placement. The worker's color makes no difference. Rather, "what you do in follow-up with the applicant" is the significant factor.

Methods:

Community involvement. Black staff are used to identify and secure the participation of resources in the black community for promotion and education such as Daddy O. Daley's ration station, beamed to the black population, and Jesse Jackson's "Bread Basket". Black workers in the Englewood office situated in a black community and the black receptionist in the downtown Chicago office carry major responsibility for the educational and promotional effort. The agency was previously unknown and unrelated to the black community, but this effort has stimulated non-Lutheran black families to use its services. Staff contact with black lay leaders throughout the central city and suburban areas was particularly helpful.

Publicity. A continuous community education and information program on the need for adoptive families for black and biracial children includes

the use of mass media, i.e., spot announcements on radio and television, appearances on television in which black and white workers are teamed up, and press releases. This sort of publicity, especially the television showing and spot announcements on black radio stations, also stimulates couples to apply.

Adoption unit staff make speeches and engage in discussions with black church groups and organizations.

Brochures are distributed and posters are displayed.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. An agency office was set up in a black community for the original purpose of establishing foster day care homes for children of working mothers. This office is now engaged in the promotional program for black adoptive applicants.

Procedures have been streamlined and eligibility requirements, relaxed. Although one applying spouse must still be Lutheran in the case of a white child, this church affiliation requirement has been waived for applicants for black and other "waiting" children.

Since it is important to follow through immediately on black applications, these applicants do not come to group meetings, which are the usual orientation procedure. Besides the fact that blacks might see this type of group orientation as "red tape", there are not enough black applicants, and they would have to wait for a group to be formed. Black adoptive applicants are given an immediate personal interview from which they move immediately into the study phase. Length of time from application to placement is now approximately three to six months.

Also, the method of study has been changed so that, instead of "investigating" applicants, the worker helps them to grow toward adoptive parenthood. In this "enabling" process, the worker and couple act together in examining the couple's capacities for adoptive parenthood and through this, develop the couple's potential to the fullest. The effort is to "screen in, not out". Thus, applicants need not prove themselves acceptable to the agency and the agency isn't forced to pass judgment on the applicants.

Staff are divided into two groups: "study" workers receive and study applicants while "placement" workers place the child in the home and provide post-placement services until the adoption is consummated. Thus, applicants are prevented from over-identifying with study workers and the latter are free to work with other applicants.

The agency is experimenting with single-parent adoptions for black and other hard-to-place children, and they have been placing trans-racially since 1963.

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Inter-agency efforts. Cooperation among adoption agencies in the community, which is necessary in an education and recruitment effort of this sort, has been primarily attributable to the Adoption Information Service. Although all agencies cooperating in AIS may not have a program or thrust specifically related to the placement of black children in adoption, all are more conscious of the need and are doing more than before in this area. Eligibility requirements were studied and are now more uniform and flexible. The study process and procedures have been streamlined and, to some degree, agencies are now focusing their study process on helping applicants to become adequate adoptive parents, rather than on investigation. Lutheran Child and Family Services also works closely with Illinois' Open Door Society. This close cooperation with other agencies represents a change in the procedures of Lutheran Child and Family Services. For the first time, they have made some of their families available to other agencies for the placement of black children.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Black people don't trust social agencies and the white community and, although the agency focuses on establishing and promoting trust, this is difficult to carry out. The ideas of black staff and individuals and organizations within the black community are utilized in promoting trust and confidence.

In order for the agency to be truly effective, more staff is needed. The agency budget, however, is limited.

Although Lutheran church affiliation is generally ignored for couples wishing to adopt black and biracial children, agency policy still requires that children be placed in "Christian" homes.

Court procedures freeing children for adoption are too slow. A subcommittee of the Adoption Information Service is evaluating these procedures in order to recommend improvements.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: A total community effort and the cooperation of all adoption agencies in the community through an organized structure such as the Adoption Information Service in Illinois are helpful in an effort of this sort. "Agencies cannot be chauvenistic. What one agency does affects all other agencies."

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--$0.00 - $160.00.*

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--$225.00 (includes court costs).**

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* Since the Community Fund expects participating agencies to raise part of their budgets through their own efforts, it is not probable that the agency will be able to eliminate fees. The highest fee for applicants still does not represent full cost to the agency. Agency costs increased in 1969 due to a decrease in available babies and an increase in the number of unmarried mothers served, particularly black.

** The agency recently screened several attorneys who will complete legal work on adoptions for $150.00, including court costs.

MARYLAND CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY
22 West 25th Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Program or Project: Adoption of Babies through Conference and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority (A.B.C.D)

Duration: 1970 - continuing.

Auspices: Public. (Funded through Child Welfare Service appropriations, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.)

Cooperating Groups: Local Departments of Social Service and voluntary social agencies.

Purpose: To recruit adoptive parents for black and biracial children.

Staff Involved: Several social workers were hired on a part-time basis to help with referrals and, one day a week, a paid worker screens telephone inquiries resulting from the A.B.C.D.'s publicity. The project has the part-time help of a public relations firm in planning and coordinating publicity efforts. Also, a great deal of volunteer help in recruitment has been provided, including assistance from a number of black people.

Methods:

Community involvement. A Steering Committee helped in planning the project and has continued its assistance in various ways. Members include people from the community, Conference and agency people, and Sorority members.

Publicity. Television, radio, and press announcements, and special documentary stories were used. During "Adopt a Black Child Week", proclaimed by the Mayor at the request of A.B.C.D., a proclamation describing the plight of homeless black children was released in the press and on television networks. Twenty-second television spots are still shown at all hours and seem to be very effective.

A documentary film about black children in Maryland needing families, which was developed by a television station and shown in and around Baltimore, generated more inquiries than any other type of publicity.

"Adoption parties", with slides of children waiting for placement and discussion periods, were held in various neighborhoods to inform individuals about the "adoption story"; "parties" were also held at YWCA's, a police station, churches, and at meetings of various organizations.

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At a booth installed at a shopping mall, pictures of black children were shown and brochures were distributed to shoppers.

A Mother's Day Reception was held in a shopping mall for all those families who had adopted black children in the two years previous.

As a followup to publicity, a 24-hour answering service was set up and interested persons were referred to specific adoption agencies.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. Every effort is made to talk with each applicant or inquirer as soon as possible and agencies have eliminated a good deal of the "red tape" involved in adoption.

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MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE
Division of Family and Children's Services
600 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02111

Program or Project: Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE)

Auspices: Public.

Cooperating Groups: State Departments of Social Welfare and private adoption agencies throughout the New England States and in some states adjacent to that area.

Purpose: To recruit adoptive homes for children with special needs, particularly black and biracial children.

Staff Involved: An Executive Director, a community organizer, and a secretary work full time coordinating MARE. A half-time staff person and several volunteers provide additional help. Staff members work closely with the Adoption Supervisor and staff in the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare.

Methods:

Community involvement. The Director is interested in community organization and endeavors to train volunteers to help with the program.

Publicity. Since the program focuses on educating the public as to the need for adoptive homes for special children, the publicity used emphasizes making the children "visible". Pictures of some of the available children appear in newspapers and magazines. One article in the pictorial section of a Boston paper resulted in over 300 inquiries. (The child pictured was described as having a heart problem and, since the article appeared during the Christmas Season, it is possible that emotional appeal had something to do with the extent of the response.) In an article on adoption, Good Housekeeping Magazine mentioned Massachusetts as a referral source. The result was hundreds of inquiries from all over the country, about 100 of which were from single women.

Television programs have been used with success and, on a special program on a Boston station, there have been discussions of particular children needing homes. Special needs of the children and the plus factors needed in adoptive parents have been described.

MARE periodically publishes a newsletter which includes information about children needing placement, as well as "success" stories. Reports are periodically prepared on the status of placements.

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A "Welfare Hotline", under the State Public Welfare Department's auspices, has brought some adoptive applicants and an ad in the Yellow Pages has brought some responses.

Informational meetings are held with various groups, and there are frequent discussion meetings with women's groups and high school and college students.

This combination of efforts has resulted in better public knowledge of what adoption is all about and apparently has reached families who previously would not have thought of adopting--primarily those who already have, or are able to have their own children.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. The State Department of Public Welfare has set up an educational program to help the adoption staff to better understand potential adoptive applicants and the potentials of children with special needs.

Manuals set up by MARE include referral information on children awaiting placement. Each referral is numbered and includes a picture of and information about the child. Previously, when pictures were not required, the children weren't placed as quickly. The manuals are kept up-to-date and staff members have easy access to them. As each child is placed, the information is indicated on the referral form. Families for Interracial Adoption is an organization of white families who have adopted or are interested in adopting trans-racially and some of the Department's children have been placed with their members.

Inter-agency efforts. The area's public and voluntary agencies work together through meetings, correspondence, and telephone contacts. This cooperation has improved relationships among the agencies and resulted in a better understanding as to the relative functions of public and voluntary agencies.

Problems and Obstacles Encounters and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Difficulties have been caused by the fact that some adoptive parent groups have not been coordinating their efforts with agency services. Meetings involving these parents and agency people have helped to mitigate some of the negative feeling that existed between the two groups.

The publication of a series of articles on adoption in a Boston newspaper resulted in a great number of applications which the agencies were not prepared to handle. Efforts are now being made to determine ahead of time when such publicity will occur so that agencies will have back-up service available.

Several applicants who wanted white infants have been disappointed upon finding that their requests cannot be met. Also, there has been some difficulty in placing large sibling groups.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: The cooperation of local and area newspapers has been an important factor in the recruitment of adoptive applicants. Using pictures of available children seems to be another major factor in the program's success. A professional photographer has donated his time in taking these pictures.

Also, involving staff members in planning the program and keeping them in touch with the variety of available children has helped to make this a successful effort.

Cost to Adoptive Parent: The public agencies place children at no cost to the adoptive parents, while the voluntary agencies have a plan for fee charging, with a sliding scale or waiver of fees. Medical and legal fees are paid by some adoptive parents.

COUNCIL ON ADOPTABLE CHILDREN
1205 Olivia Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Auspices: Voluntary.

Cooperating Groups: Michigan public and voluntary adoption agencies.

Purpose: To promote the adoption of so called "hard-to-place" children including those in minority groups, those with physical and mental defects, older children, and sibling groups. The basic aim is to encourage and recruit adoptive applicants who might not otherwise have considered adoption, educate these people as to the children available, and assist them in finding an appropriate agency.

Staff Involved: COAC is a voluntary organization composed of adoptive parents, professional people, and others interested in promoting the adoption of available waiting children. There are branches operating in several states throughout the country.

Methods:

Publicity. COAC members hold educational meetings as well as coffee discussions, picnics, etc., where others who might be interested in adoption can come and meet experienced adoptive families. If these people decide to adopt, they are assisted in finding appropriate adoption agencies. The organization issues a monthly newsletter on happenings in the adoption field and has also developed a library of reading materials and visual aids which is available to the public. Members of a Speaker's Bureau, who use an entertaining and factual slide talk, are active in meeting with various groups.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. COAC has moved into the broader areas of legislation and other issues affecting adoption. They were active, for example, in getting Michigan's adoption law amended to eliminate race, religion, and cultural background as factors to be taken into consideration in adoptive placement. COAC has been utilizing the Detroit Junior League in offering volunteer services to the Wayne County Juvenile Court in Detroit and securing information on the status of permanent court wards. This information has been proving most useful in pointing out the potential of the waiting children, and has led to the development of an adoption promotion unit in the Court.

Inter-agency efforts. Families inquiring about adoption are referred to established agencies. COAC keeps lists of adoption agencies and helpful citizen groups throughout Michigan and in other states, as well as lists of available children. The organization also works in various ways in helping agencies to maintain realistic adoption policies, and

to streamline their procedures.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Adoption agencies frequently do not follow through with applicants referred by COAC. Inquirers are asked to report back to COAC after referral so that obstacles can be removed. Often the reason given by an agency for not welcoming an applicant is "shortage of children". If a child is available on a COAC list from another state, the prospective applicant is told to return to the Michigan agency with the information that they can get a child from 'X' state. This usually brings action from the Michigan agency. COAC has been involved in setting up a state and national computerized tracking of available children and families so that the agencies themselves can do this job with greater efficiency, rather than relying heavily on volunteer help.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: Newspaper articles on a daily or weekly basis, which describe a particular child needing a family, are one of the keys to successful recruitment. Papers will provide the space and writers at no cost because of the reader appeal in an article of this sort. COAC has been instrumental in selling the idea, first to the newspapers, and then to the agencies.

Cost to Adoptive Parent: No fee is charged for COAC's services.

HOMES FOR BLACK CHILDREN
2595 West Grand Boulevard
Detroit, Michigan 48208

Duration: September 1969 - continuing.

Auspices: Voluntary. (Program is administered by the Lutheran Children's Friend Society and carried out by the staff of Homes for Black Children. L.C.F.S. supports H.B.C. through a yearly grant of $99,500 under a contract with United Community Services. As of January 1972, H.B.C. will become an independent agency under the auspices of U.C.S.)

Cooperating Groups: 13 child-placing agencies in the Detroit area.

Purpose: To recruit and make studies of applicants for the adoption of black children and to place children in adoptive homes. The program is limited to the City of Detroit and three adjoining counties.

Staff Involved: Those directly responsible for the project include an Administrative Director, six workers, including the project's Director and Co-director (four black), and three field work students (two black), one of whom is in administration. Also, a number of volunteers contribute their time and ideas to the project.

Methods:

Community involvement. A public relations expert is available to the program.

An Advisory Board consists of all black members, ranging from community leaders to "just ordinary people, for example, factory workers". It also includes adoptive parents, a Muslim minister, and others. "People who have a committment and are involved in social issues" are wanted as members. When H.B.C. becomes an independent agency (see Auspices), this Advisory Board will serve as the Board of Directors. The Advisory Board planned a tea to which members invited 300 of their friends to extend knowledge of the agency and its program to a wider audience.

The agency has an auxillary group in addition to the Advisory Board. Members furnish transportation, decorate and organize the office, and like chores.

White volunteers, both individuals and groups, support and contribute to the agency in various ways, and an auxiliary group furnishes transportation, decorates and organizes the office, etc.

Another group of volunteers consists mainly of professional people. M.S.W.'s do adoptive studies, psychologists and psychiatrists examine children on a volunteer basis, etc.

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Through a Board member, the Michigan Gas Company paid for a 15-minute film in which significant parts of the study process are shown. Another Board member arranged for the Detroit Electric Company to pay for the printing of brochures.

Additional offers of recruitment assistance, which have been held back because the agency has had all the applicants they can handle, will be used when and if applications drop off.

Publicity. The knowledge of a professional public relations person and use of the mass media are important in creating an awareness of the problem and in educating the community. The first applications came from this source. Television and radio are used and the editor of a weekly newspaper column called "Adopt a Child" has alerted the community to the need for adoption. One article in a Muslim newspaper brought 100 applications from all over the country. A local black newspaper has offered to run a series on adoption, but the agency is holding this for future use as they already have all the applicants they can service.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. Flexibility of procedures, creativity, and a willingness to take risks are all important. The adoption study is done in a relaxed manner and is focused on helping couples move into adoption. This includes such things as helping applicants to get documents required in court such as marriage certificates, records of divorces, etc.

The study procedures are flexible and geared to the needs of the applicants. If enough applications are received at one time, group meetings are held, but the applicants decide whether or not they wish to participate. When applications are received singly, the study process begins as soon as the applicants are assigned to a worker. Interviews may be held in the home or at the office during regular hours, at night, or on weekends. Staff are free to develop their own time schedules. During the interview, the application form is discussed and the couple is helped to fill it out immediately, if they wish. No forms are routinely handed out for the applicants to return.

There is flexibility in requirements for applicants also. For instance, as to a family's income, it is not the amount which matters but rather, how well they manage it.

The final decision concerning the application rests with the worker, but if she has questions or doubts, she may ask for suggestions from staff. When it is felt that placement is inappropriate, the worker and the applicant discuss the situation and usually reach a mutual agreement. If they fail to agree, applicants have the option of choosing another worker.

From reading and observation, staff members are cognizant of the black family's life style and clear about successful parenting in the black community--"It means the ability to overcome obstacles in our society, which have restricted the black family's resources, its opportunities, and its chances for survival." This knowledge is being used for the express purpose of securing adoptive homes for black children. Although an all black staff is not required in serving the black community, all staff must understand black life styles and experience. Traditional standards and procedures of adoption agencies are viewed as "irrelevant" to the life-styles of the black community. Professional social work knowledge and skills are practiced in a way that's relevant to the black community and to adoptive applicants. All staff are involved in all agency activities, including administration--each staff worker carries more than one type of responsibility.

Since the agency believes black adoptive families can be found, they have not placed any black children with white families, although they would not deny a child the opportunity for a stable family if there were no other resource. Ordinarily, though, white couples are referred to other agencies.

Inter-agency efforts. The agency works cooperatively with the 13 child-placing agencies in Detroit. This is the source of referral of children. Studies of adoptive applicants made by H.B.C. are accepted by the other agencies. Some agencies do not require a copy of the study of the family. When an agency has the type of child as to age, sex, etc., requested by the applicant, the two agencies reach an agreement regarding the placement. The H.B.C. worker accompanies the adoptive applicant to see the child in the other agency's foster home and continues with the family until placement is made and the adoption is consummated. There is a good relation between H.B.C. and the Juvenile Court Judge. H.B.C. works cooperatively with Spaulding, a small agency in Chelsea which places children throughout the State.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

H.B.C. didn't receive a budgetary increase for its second year of operation because the funding agency had less to distribute to the area's social agencies.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: In Detroit, because of the auto industry, there are perhaps more blacks with incomes ranging from $9,000 to $20,000 than in any other city in the country. Consequently, they also live in better housing and neighborhoods. Also, the 1967 riots had the effect of bringing blacks together--and they "...want to do something for black children". The black community's response to adoption is still good, in spite of present economic conditions.

The Juvenile Court Judge has been very cooperative in releasing children for adoption. When committing a child to a non-referring agency, he has often requested that the child be referred to H.B.C. for adoption.

The black community has become aware of the need for adoptive homes and they feel like a part of the agency. This "black identity of the agency" is an important factor in its success.

Depending upon how the agency works and what it does in relation to applicants, "word-of-mouth" and "person-to-person" communication can be important as recruitment approaches.

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--None.

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--$9.00 in court costs.

SPAULDING FOR CHILDREN
3660 Waltrous Road
Chelsea, Michigan 48118

Duration: 1968 - continuing.

Auspices: Voluntary.

Purpose: To place waiting children with special needs into adoptive homes. (See Methods: Intra-agency modifications)

Staff involved: Executive Director

Methods:

Publicity. The agency uses the mass media in recruitment and also distributes flyers on available children.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. Initially the agency was unsure about the definition of a "hard-to-place" child, but they have since learned that blackness per se does not put a child in this category. Black and biracial infants can be placed in black homes. However, older black children and family groups are more difficult to place and the agency is now concentrating on the school-age black child. This is done in the course of finding homes for all "hard-to-place" children referred.

Inter-agency efforts. All of Spaulding's adoptive placements are made by referrals from other agencies. Spaulding works closely with Homes for Black Children, exchanging children and homes. Because of funding, H.B.C. is restricted to the Detroit area so Spaulding accepts families referred by H.B.C. from outside areas.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Michigan's courts and adoption agencies are faced with the problem of having many black children in care who need adoptive placement, and too few black families to adopt these children. While the agencies complain that permanent planning for these children is impossible because they are frequently retained in "temporary" wardship, the courts indicate that they are hesitant to permanently terminate parental rights on cases involving black children because the agencies cannot guarantee enough adoptive homes for them. The only recourse seems to be intensive community pressure to free the children for placement and support for new agency efforts to reach the black community and recruit potential parents.

Cost to Adoptive Parent: An adopting family is charged no placement fee other than the legal filing fee of $9.00 per child, required in the local probate court. Referring agencies, however, are asked to pay a purchase-of-service fee of $500.00 if Spaulding is successful in the permanent placement of a child.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICE OF MINNESOTA
2414 Park Avenue
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Auspices: Voluntary.

Cooperating Groups: Open Door Society; OURS (Our United Response).

Purpose: To make adoption possible for every child needing placement by changing the total approach to the process. There is no specialized program for black children as they are considered along with the other children needing families.

Staff Involved: Entire Adoption Unit Staff of Lutheran Social Service and many volunteer groups.

Methods:

Community involvement. The agency receives requests from schools, churches, etc. for more information about adoption and the factors involved. As a result of this, there has been a growing interest in trans-racial adoption. The community has also come to realize that black couples are welcomed and accepted as adoptive parents. Since the community is seen as an integral part of a child's "home", the agency feels that communication with the community and adoptive applicants is equally important.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. Due to the stress on presenting all children in need of placement to adoptive applicants, there is now a more knowledgable and objective discussion between the applicants and the workers on the factors involved in being parents to a child of another race. Also, the realistic factors involved in adoption are now discussed more openly with prospective parents. Workers discuss the applicant's interest and ability to deal with the assumption that children should resemble their parents. About 40 to 50 percent of adoptive applicants are interested in a child of a different race than their own.

The study process has been streamlined and now consists largely of group meetings with adoptive applicants. The average length of time from application to placement is approximately one to three months for a black child. The exact amount of time depends on the period involved for referral as about one half or more of black placements are from other states.

Inter-agency efforts. Minnesota's Department of Public Welfare has, for many years, emphasized the importance of adoptive placement of children with special needs. In 1957, when there was an acute need for adoptive homes for Indian, Mexican, and Negro children, an ad hoc committee of public and voluntary agencies set up a two-year project known

as "Parents to Adopt Minority Youngsters" (PAMY). Among the white families who responded to the publicity were some who expressed an interest in adopting black children. This response led the State Department of Public Welfare to an acceptance of trans-racial placement. Since the PAMY project, the Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota has been placing the largest number of children with special needs.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Additional time was needed to bring about the adoptive placement of children from states other than Minnesota.

Since the staff was unable to assume the total responsibility for their large workload, a volunteer program was developed and there was then a question as to how the volunteer's efforts might best be coordinated.

Although many trans-racial placements have been made, the number of applications for white infants continues to increase. The agency, however, has decided not to limit the intake of applicants since this might rule out many families who might later be interested in adopting children with special needs. It has also been stressed that there is a surplus of these "special" children needing families throughout the country.

BUREAU OF CHILD WELFARE
New York City Department of Social Services
80 Lafayette Street
New York, New York 10013

Duration: 1967 - continuing.

Auspices: Public.

Purpose: To inform the public as to what adoption is all about in an effort to recruit suitable families for black and biracial children; to develop a public conscience regarding the individual citizen's responsibility in planning for children waiting for adoption.

Staff Involved: A full-time staff member gears her efforts toward public relations and community education about the needs of children and, since the recruitment effort is part of staff activity, B.C.W. staff are involved.

Methods:

Community involvement. The Mayor's Advisory Council on Adoption, members of which are individually invited by the Mayor to join, includes prominent citizens from all segments of the community. Initial interest in the Council is fostered by individual contacts made by B.C.W.'s public relations people.

The Parents Action Committee on Adoption, composed of adoptive parents and set up by the Mayor at the same time as his Advisory Council, has given great support to all recruitment efforts. Many different segments of the community have also been involved. (See Methods: Publicity)

Publicity. For the past 18 months, a large local newspaper has carried a photograph of a black child under the heading of "Most Adoptable Child of the Month". Eighty percent of the applications responding to this publicity come from black families.

During "Adopt-a-Child" Week, held in the spring and again in the fall in each of New York's five boroughs, all segments of the community are involved in the recruitment effort in various ways. These include mass media, government officials, commerce, industry, and labor groups, social agencies, etc. Leaflets and brochures are distributed on a planned basis and special community functions take place.

Each year the City holds an afternoon tea in one of the large hotels to honor adoptive parents. Professional entertainment is provided through contacts of members of the Mayor's Advisory Council. The widespread publicity given to this function is a productive source for the recruitment of new adoptive parents. Television and radio spots, many including prominent people, are broadcast on stations in and around New York

City. A weekly radio series entitled "Children Can't Wait" often features adoption and allows time for supplying information, as well as recruiting. Interviews with adoptive parents and staff members of B.C.W.'s Adoption Services Division are used on radio and television specials and in major newspapers.

Posters and displays consisting of attractive pictures of adoptive parents and their children are used during special seasons of the year in windows of strategically located department stores--usually of the discount variety, which are most often frequented by the families being sought. This recruitment material is also used in churches, housing projects, bus stations, beauty parlors, barber shops, libraries, community and health centers, etc.

Cards reading "You Need Love to Adopt a Child" are used in the City's subway systems and on City and suburban bus lines. This card was reproduced for use in national magazines and those directed to the black community, commuter's timetables, local newspapers reaching the black community, etc.

The recruitment message is also carried on milk cartons, outdoor billboards, the Goodyear blimp, and on streamers on airplanes covering New York City beaches during the summer months.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. Brief individual meetings are now held with prospective parents in order to explain adoption and, generally speaking, agency involvement and concern over the problem of homes for black and biracial children has grown.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Because of overcrowded court calendars, there are often delays in the legal procedures necessary for adoption. Also, many applicants fail to pursue their applications due to a fear of the required medical examination. The cost of these examinations sometimes creates a problem, but efforts are being made to work out a more flexible procedure with Blue-Cross-Blue Shield.

FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT WELFARE AGENCIES
281 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10010

Auspices: Voluntary.

Cooperating Groups: 13 agencies including: Edwin Gould Foundation for Children; Windham Children's Service; Sheltering Arms Children's Service; Speedwell Services for Children, Inc.; Brookwood Child Care; New York Foundling Home; Cardinal McCloskey School and Home for Children; Catholic Home Bureau; St. Cabrini Home, Inc.; McMahon Shelter; Jewish Child Care Association; Louise Wise Services; and Children's Aid Society.

Purpose: To recruit foster and adoptive families for black children in Northeast Bronx through a saturative and prolonged effort to inform the people of the need to find homes for waiting children, and what they can do to meet this need. While some previous recruitment efforts have been geared to foster care or adoption separately, the planning committee, after considerable thought, decided to combine both types of recruitment in this effort. Plans call for the eventual "saturation" of each of five neighborhoods.

Staff Involved: Four persons are directly responsible for coordination of the recruitment effort. Additional staffing is provided by participating agencies. Members of the Seek-A-Home Committee, a volunteer group, are active in the effort.

Methods:

Community involvement. A special effort was made to include neighborhood leaders in the recruitment effort's planning stage. Great emphasis has been placed on developing an awareness of community needs among residents.

A number of youths have been working with the Seek-A-Home Committee and have designed flyers which they've distributed. They have also developed a play entitled "What It Means Not to Have a Home".

Volunteers from the Seek-A-Home Committee and other organizations have contributed their time and services in acquainting people with children's needs. Foster parents are also involved in this effort and have been found to be one of the best groups of recruiters.

Publicity. A poster showing a very attractive child has been developed and distributed in various stores and agencies. Black entertainers, baseball players, and other personalities have contributed time and effort, as has a magazine publisher. Rallies promoting adoption have been held.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. All agencies have agreed to give "back-up" services and to respond immediately when an inquirer or applicant is referred. If applicants wish, workers will go to their home for the first interview. Recording of the studies has been streamlined and total study time, now six months on the average, will be shortened. Group meetings, staffed by the agencies, are held within the neighborhood.

Inter-agency efforts. Continuous efforts are directed toward making a special appeal within the neighborhoods of specific areas of the City.

Following referral to an agency (on the basis of religion or the particular needs of an agency), the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies sends a letter to each couple, telling them what particular agency will contact them within a week's time.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: New York State passed legislation providing for subsidized adoption, effective as of September 1968, and it is expected that this will be an asset in recruiting homes for black children.

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Medical fee--When indicated, medical examinations are provided without charge by some physicians on agency staffs.

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HARLEM-DOWLING CHILDREN'S SERVICE
2090 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10027

Duration: 1969 - continuing. (See Purpose)

Auspices: Voluntary.

Cooperating groups: New York City Department of Social Services; New York State Department of Social Services; several foundations.

Purpose: "To help natural parents to provide good homes for their children if possible and, if not, to place them in adoption. When neither plan is feasible, long-term, foster care which may eventuate in a permanent home" is substituted. The program emphasizing the placement of black children actually began in 1962 when the Spence-Chapin Adoption Service placed 2,000 black babies left in hospitals and shelters into long-term foster care and adoption. This program was quite successful, but there was still a need for adoptive families for black children. It was decided that the best approach to this problem would be through the black community. (See Factors Reported as Most Helpful) By locating an agency in the black community, it was felt that more unwed black mothers and children needing families could be reached and also, that the community would develop a pride in having a child-caring agency of its own. Consequently, plans for an adoption and foster care agency were developed in 1968 and, in April 1969, Harlem-Dowling began operating as a branch office of Spence-Chapin. Although Spence-Chapin had funds available to finance the agency's first year, Harlem-Dowling received sufficient funding through various foundations and reimbursement for services by the City and State Departments of Social Services. Spence-Chapin, however, continues to assume responsibility for any financial deficit. The ultimate goal is for Harlem-Dowling to become an independent agency, but if this doesn't occur within the five-year project period, Spence-Chapin will continue the program.

Staff involved: Those directly responsible include: Agency Director; four supervisors; two full-time workers; two part-time workers; five work-study students; five field work students; part-time pediatrician; two nurses; part-time psychiatrist. All of this staff is black except one of the work-study and the five field work students.

Methods:

Community involvement. The agency relies on satisfied applicants for recruiting foster and adoptive homes. Members of the Advisory Council also recruit, as do all staff members, and the Director often speaks to community groups.

There has been very little feedback from the community's ministerial alliance. This group was slow in responding to an invitation to membership on the Advisory Council and, when this situation was made known, a young minister responded and is now an active Council member.

The agency also has an excellent working relationship with community resources such as schools, hospitals and physicians, and church and community centers.

Publicity. Articles appear in local and large daily newspapers. There are occasional spot announcements on a "soul" radio station, but no television is used because "they want something spectacular" and the Director doesn't wish to "expose" the children. "Throw away" materials are also distributed.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. The agency's motto is to "screen in, not out" and their only concern is with the ability of the applicants to become good parents. Thus, policies and procedures are flexible and the study is streamlined. Initial interviews are held in the applicant's home, if they so desire, and there are no group sessions. Although there are no rigid restrictions on the age of applicants, people of child-bearing age are preferred for infants. For older children, it depends on the ability of the applicants. Also, no fertility tests are required. Very few applicants are refused.

The agency has completed three subsidized adoptions and four more are waiting for certification by the Bureau of Child Welfare. Foster parents are selected on the basis of their possibly becoming adoptive parents. Although one trans-racial adoption has been done, the agency is very cautious about this type of placement.

Inter-agency efforts. The agency is affiliated with the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, composed of all foster care agencies engaged in recruiting foster and adoptive families.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Black girls, especially the unsophisticated younger ones, take a longer time than whites to decide to release their babies for adoption. Their parents are often resistant to adoption as some of them want to raise the children themselves.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: Much of the program's success is due to the way in which Harlem-Dowling was established. During the planning stage, the present Director talked with leaders of all segments of Harlem's population and then asked all organizations and groups to select two representatives as members of the agency's Advisory Council. It was explained to these representatives that the Council, which now has between 12 and 14 regular members, was to represent the agency and its program in the community and feed the community's reactions to the program back to the agency. At the start of the project, offices for

the agency had been rented in an office building in the center of Harlem. The Council recommended that the space be remodeled and, wherever feasible, that the furnishings and supplies come from black businesses in the Harlem community. The Council also selected the agency's name. In short, there was and is much community involvement in Harlem-Dowling and the people are very proud of "their agency".

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--$100 to $2000 (based on income and may be waived).*

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--$75 to $250 (The agency's attorney will modify his fee, and, in some instances, the agency will pay the legal fee. Also, applicants may choose to use their own attorneys.)

Court cost--$10 to $25.

* There is no fee to adoptive parents who do not wish to pay. Fees "turn off" some black applicants, since they see this as paying for a child. Many, on the other hand, do choose to pay and some feel that a fee gives the service a greater value. The higher their income, the more likely applicants are to object to paying. Many in this group state that they would rather use this money to set up educational insurance for the child. The agency considers the fee a service charge.

LOUISE WISE SERVICES
12 East 94th Street
New York, New York 10028

Duration: 1950 - continuing.

Auspices: Voluntary.

Cooperating Groups: Bureau of Child Welfare, New York City Department of Social Services.

Purpose: To place black children in adoptive homes and, beginning in 1965, to provide services to unmarried black mothers, offering them the same alternatives for care of their babies as is given to white girls.

Staff Involved: Staff include the agency's Director, the Executive Assistant to the Director, the Adoption Department Supervisor and eight workers (all of whom are now involved in black adoption), one Case Aide, a public relations person, a pediatrician, and a psychiatric consultant (black). Also, black persons have been added to the agency's Board.

Methods:

Community involvement. An inter-racial committee of community people and Board and staff members was established to assist in recruiting families for black children. Members help to solve problems which arise, make suggestions on policies and procedures, etc. Also, many individuals and groups have been involved in recruitment and publicity activities on a volunteer basis. (See Methods: Publicity)

Publicity. The agency has a "continuous recruitment" program to secure foster or adoptive families for black children. Regular spot announcements on radio and television, and newspaper articles are used, but personal approaches bring the best results. Since it is important to contact men because they "resist adoption" more than women, the agency's adoptive fathers have held smokers at a restaurant and at the agency's office. Adoptive couples hold teas in their homes and a black sorority has sponsored several art shows in the agency's office, which have involved many people and given publicity to the agency. "An agency must try all approaches and innovations. This must be constant, varied, and ingenious."

Intra-agency modifications. "Readiness for prompt handling is most important" and an agency must be flexible in all procedures in order to meet the needs of their clients. Initial interviews may be held in the home or at the office. If the wife wishes, she may come in alone for the initial visit, or the whole family may come in. For both black and white applicants, the study is focused on helping them move into adoption, not on investigating them. The length of time from application to

placement ranges from six weeks to three months, depending on when the family wants the child, when they feel they are ready, etc.

Three children have been placed with single people and "a few" on a subsidy basis. (Legally, only foster parents can be subsidized.) Some applicants refuse the subsidy due to a fear that it may be cut off.

About five years ago, the agency expanded their program to include services to black unmarried mothers. They now have two maternity homes--one for prenatal care and the other for postnatal care up to six months. Along with the adoption program for black babies, the agency is now able to "give the black girl the same alternatives as white girls". The experience with this combination of services to black girls has had an "impact on working with white clientele". The agency is "taking a different kind of look--seeing the agency as helping" and attempting to deal with the total range of needs.

In the fall of 1970, the agency began a new program of extended foster care for children who may go into adoption or be returned home. Every effort is made, however, to see that the child does not remain in foster care indefinitely. It is felt that the natural parents should be assisted in providing a home for their child or surrendering him for adoption. Court action is seen as appropriate if the parents continue to let their child remain "in limbo". At the same time, temporary foster care is used for children waiting to move into adoptive homes. White infants and young children are placed in black foster homes and blacks are placed with white families. Foster parents attend in-service training program sessions along with staff.

In order to help staff move from one kind of client group to another and adjust to new programs and procedures, the agency has developed an in-service training program. The agency is "building bridges to the community and is helping staff to get on the bridge". Both white and black staff needed help in this area as they were all "middle-class" oriented. The black psychiatrist was employed to help in this program.

The agency must be bold in its approach to the black community. In addition to middle-class blacks, lower income groups must also be contacted and, in the latter group, agencies must understand life styles and what constitutes "good family living", rather than relying on their middle-class attitudes.

Inter-agency efforts. The agency recruits homes for "all children in the community", not just those under their care. They see and study all applicants, call other agencies about available homes, and then work with the agency who has the child.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Community attitudes toward out-of-wedlock pregnancy, poverty, New York City's housing situation, and unemployment present problems in finding adoptive families for black children.

The agency is operating on a deficit budget due, in part, to reducing or waiving fees for black applicants and the reduction in voluntary contributions.

Presently, there are great differences in policies and procedures among City agencies and each of them are making separate requests to the mass media for help in recruitment. Also, whereas previously there was a great need for families for black infants, the situation has changed, due largely to New York's abortion legislation. Thus, what is needed now is a coordinated city-wide effort aimed at recruiting adoptive families for older black children and others who are harder to place.

Cost to Adoptive Parent: Fees are on a sliding scale and are determined on the basis of the income of husband and wife during the year preceding the child's placement. They range from $175.00 to a maximum of $425.00, are payable in three installments, and include the cost of a medical examination by the agency's physician as well as the agency's payment to the lawyer and court disbursements at the time of legal adoption. The agency retains only a small part of the amount paid, and most of it is used for medical and legal expenses.

CHILDREN"S HOME SOCIETY OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.
740 Chestnut Street
Greensboro, North Carolina 27405

Duration: November 1970 - continuing.

Auspices: Voluntary.

Cooperating Groups: North Carolina State Department of Social Services; Auxiliary-Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Society, Greensboro; Friendship Baptist Church, Charlotte; Livingstone College, Salisbury.

Purpose: To recruit black families for the adoptive placement of black children waiting for homes.

Staff Involved: Two black social workers and two black graduate students in social work were added to the basic staff.

Methods:

Community involvement. Black concern groups throughout the State were organized for the purpose of making known the need for permanent homes for children. Also, the aid of organized black groups was enlisted to critically examine those agency practices which might have acted as deterrents to the black family wishing to apply for adoption.

"A board member on viewing a television film of black happy parents contributed $300.00 to develop a documentary of the agency's services."

Publicity. Utilization of mass media includes television interviews on stations with statewide coverage featuring happy black adoptive families, spot announcements and interviews on popular black radio stations featuring soul music, and distribution of material to all black newspapers and major dailies in the State. Press releases were picked up by Afro-American and Black Times.

Posters of black children have been sent to county fairs, personnel offices, churches, and schools, and handouts are distributed by black leaders at churches and meetings of all types. Also, the aid of black groups and leaders has been enlisted in "telling the story" to the black community through special events.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. Upon receiving applications, workers make themselves available for home study at hours convenient to applicants. In general, there is a greater flexibility in intake procedures. Workers have accepted the black family's "life style" and convey encouragement to those families showing an interest in adoption.

Inter-agency efforts. Inquiries on the program have been received from

several neighboring states and the executive of a voluntary agency in North Carolina said "You helped us out--we had no applicants, then all of a sudden we had six."

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any: No obstacles have been encountered, primarily due to the fact that "The confidence and support of black leaders were obtained initially by allowing for a non-defensive type confrontation."

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: The cooperation of black leaders in taking leadership and acting as liaisons with the black community has contributed greatly to the project's success.

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--The agency has no fee system and, if applicants do choose to contribute, the amount depends on what they feel they can afford.

Legal fee--Applicants are responsible for legal costs, but the agency will assume an advocacy role in obtaining legal help if the parents so request. Legal aid has come from various sources such as the company attorney of the applicant's employer and contributions of concerned attorneys.

THE CHILDREN'S HOME OF CINCINNATI, OHIO, INC.
2400 Reading Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Duration: 1970 - continuing.

Auspices: Voluntary.

Purpose: To create awareness in the black community of the need for adoptive homes for black children.

Staff Involved: Those directly responsible for the project include a supervisor/caseworker, a caseworker, and a social worker aide. All are black.

The program to educate the community as to the need for homes and, hopefully, to recruit adoptive applicants at the same time, is developed and carried out by the Committee on Black Adoptions--a group of black parents who adopted through the agency. Twelve sets of parents participate to varying degrees, but five couples are involved on a continuous basis. The supervisor/caseworker and caseworker act as "back-up" to the adoptive parents, i.e., see that correspondence and other typing is done, arrange contacts with television and radio stations, etc.

Although it is felt that black workers should definitely launch any recruitment effort for black adoptive families, white workers are assigned to receive applications and make studies of black applicants. In the beginning, two black workers were assigned to the project and two volunteered, one of whom has since left.

Methods:

Community involvement. The total recruitment effort is planned and carried out by parents who have adopted children through the agency. They decorated and manned the booths at the national meeting of the NAACP and the Black Expo. (See Methods: Publicity)

News media, television, and radio have been more receptive to black groups. "A year ago the TV stations would have laughed at us in our request for free time to present a program." The black community has become more aware of the agency and the need for homes for black children.

Publicity. Mass media efforts include appearances on television shows and talks on radio, in both of which adoptive parents participate. Television spot announcements are used, as are newspaper and magazine articles.

Bumper stickers and flyers are distributed and booths were set up at the National Meeting of the NAACP and at Black Expo, an annual affair

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showing the progress of black people since slavery.

While announcements on black radio stations are most productive, television showings of babies and adoptive parents have also brought responses. "All approaches are needed."

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. The agency has made three trans-racial adoptions of biracial children and one single-parent adoption out of four such applications received. The agency has made no single-parent placements of white children since there are far fewer of them than there are applicants. Two children have been adopted on a subsidy basis by couples who had been foster parents to them for many years. (Each subsidy granted must be approved by the Board.)

The project has had very little, if any, impact on the total agency--changes in policy relative to fees, age limits, employed mothers, etc., apply only to black applicants.

Inter-agency efforts. Unsuccessful attempts have been made to develop a cooperative recruitment program with the other adoption agencies in the community.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

Lack of cooperation between agencies is the greatest problem.

Since it was only black workers who were actively involved in the project's recruitment efforts, it was sometimes difficult for the other staff to feel involved and as a result, the black workers often felt "alone" in their work. There is also concern over the fact that while applicants are recruited by blacks, they are generally seen by white workers since there is only one black worker on the staff. Although there has been no overt negative reaction to this, there is uncertainty as to how black applicants really feel about it. At any rate, it is felt that there is a definite need for additional black workers, which the agency's budget will not allow at this point.

The agency has no definite policy on race; for example, black foster parents accept white babies, but white foster parents won't accept a black child.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: Television showings of babies and referrals by adoptive parents have brought responses. Announcements on black radio stations beamed to the black community "are most productive".

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--Usually none for black applicants, but whites pay on a sliding scale.

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--Applicants pay fee to the lawyer of their choice, but another plan is being worked out with an attorney on the Board.

THE BOYS AND GIRLS AID SOCIETY OF OREGON
2301 N. W. Glisan Street
Portland, Oregon 97210

Program or Project: "Opportunity"

Auspices: Voluntary.

Purpose: The Society has two programs: "Opportunity" and the "clinical" or Children's Services program. "Opportunity" is a national program "...aimed at facilitating and accelerating the adoption of children of black ancestry through placement in white families", thus broadening adoption opportunities for these children. (See Methods: Intra-agency modifications) The clinical program provides adoptions, foster family care, a small group home for six or eight pregnant girls, services to pregnant girls in their own homes or independent living arrangements, and residential care for children in specialized foster homes.

Staff Involved: The Associate State Director has the primary responsibility for "Opportunity". The Director of Children's Services has primary responsibility for all of the clinical program. Other staff include 18 social workers, five of whom are men and one of whom is black.

Methods:

Publicity. In relation to promoting trans-racial adoption through the "Opportunity" program, the Society has used several techniques. A film showing the successful placement of black children with two white families, originally developed as a television documentary with the help of the Society, has been produced as a 16 mm. film and is available to other agencies at a low price on a purchase or rental basis. As of April 1969, 48 agencies in 23 states had bought or leased the film.

As to the Society's own adoption recruitment program, they have found that radio and television reach the most people; but the use of mass media is curtailed when a sufficient number of applications are obtained. However, the most successful recruitment efforts result from contacting referrals made by applicants and adoptive parents.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. When the Society began to emphasize the adoptive placement of black children in the early 1950's, their recruitment efforts were aimed at the black community. Eventually the black leaders pointed out that their community was not in a position to adopt all of the waiting children and, in 1960, the Society adopted a policy of actively recruiting white families for black children. In 1967, this program for the promotion of trans-racial adoption was given the name "Opportunity". Under the program, the Society continues to promote the adoption of black children by white parents by attempting to encourage and help other adoption agencies throughout the country. The Society would like to work out a "methodology" for the placement of

black children, using the resources of the country and "Opportunity" as "the laboratory".

As to their own adoptive applicants, the Society relaxed requirements on age, childlessness, etc. in the 1940's. Their first single-parent placement was made in 1949. Oregon passed a state-wide subsidy law only recently and, up until then, only a very few special cases had received any sort of subsidy.

In discussions with applicants as to what kind of child they want, workers always ask if they're interested in a black child. The Society's purpose is to broaden resources for the adoption of all hard-to-place children. There is, however, no specific focus on black children.

Inter-agency efforts. Through "Opportunity", articles and other written material on trans-racial adoptions are available to agencies and individuals seeking information. In addition, the "Opportunity" staff makes an annual national survey of adoptive placements of black children in black and in white families made by voluntary and public adoption agencies. Survey results are analyzed and reports are published. (Survey results for 1968, 1969, and 1970 have been published.)

"Opportunity" maintains contact with organizations of parents who have adopted minority children, such as the Open Door Society. It has also helped to organize such groups and has compiled a list of over 50 of them.

The Society is presently placing black children from other states through its clinical program, and is in a position to place many more. It has offered to accept full responsibility for groups of young black children from other agencies if they have difficulty in placing them. If foundation funds are secured, the Society will concentrate on locating agencies which may have an accumulation of black children waiting for adoption and helping develop cooperative plans so that more such children can be placed by the Society or by other agencies.

The Society feels that its program has stimulated other agencies to place children trans-racially, thus increasing the number of black children placed.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

The major problem in developing the "Opportunity" program has been lack of funds. If foundation funds can be secured, additional staff will be employed to provide more consultation service to agencies and to undertake publicity and education.

Cost to Adoptive Parents:

Agency fee--None, but applicants are asked to make a contribution.

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--Cost of lawyer's services.

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MEDINA CHILDREN'S SERVICE
123 16th Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98122

Program or Project: Minority Adoption Program

Duration: The Minority Adoption Program became operational in April 1967 and since then, has become a regular part of the agency budget and program.

Auspices: Voluntary.

Cooperating Groups: United Good Neighbors (the community's funding agency); Children's Home Society of Washington; Catholic Children's Services; Lutheran Family and Children's Service; County offices of the State Department of Public Assistance in the four counties served by the project--King, Pierce, Kitsap, and Snohomish.

Purpose: To make a concerted effort to find adoptive families for black and biracial children.

Staff Involved: Those directly involved in the project include one half-time casework supervisor, a full-time caseworker, a full-time secretary (black) and a part-time public relations consultant. (A full-time caseworker, provided for three and one half years by the State Department of Public Assistance, and a community worker [black] are no longer with the project.) Assignments are made to the regular staff of the agency (Medina).

Methods:

Community involvement: During M.A.P.'s beginning phases, agency staff interviewed 42 black and five white adoptive and boarding parents who were affiliated with the adoption agencies in the four-county area served by the project. Suggestions for the project's operation and comments on roadblocks to black and trans-racial adoptions were obtained. Initially, the project office was located in the black community and three years later, it was moved, along with the parent agency, to a building in an interracial, residential community. M.A.P., however, still maintains a separate telephone line and staff.

The project's Advisory Committee, which is now 50 percent black, consists of community people and a board member from each of the cooperating agencies. The members were responsible for arranging for legal services for the agency and, in the program's early days, they accepted speaking engagements. The Committee has not met recently.

The project has the support of local newspapers and television stations, as well as a black radio station.

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Publicity. The public relations consultant is a professional person and has contacts with television and newspapers. She carefully chooses each opportunity to present the program to the public and the result is a regular, though "low-keyed" publicity program.

There have been numerous television shows, radio interviews, and newspaper articles dealing with adoption. The most effective types of this mass media publicity have been the frequent television and radio public service spot announcements, some of which have been aired at prime times. Also, on a weekly television show concerning "hard-to-place" children, each of M.A.P.'s cooperating agencies takes a turn at showing black children available for adoption.

Medina's entire staff participates in the public relations effort. They respond to all requests from community groups to talk about the program. Although no applicants are recruited from some of these groups (students, etc.), information about the program is becoming widespread.

Seattle has a small black community. In the beginning of the program, the community worker left pamphlets in beauty and barber shops and any other places frequented by the black community. She gave talks to community groups and also spent two days a week at the multi-service center of state governmental agencies where she gave out pamphlets and talked with people about the program. Presently recruitment is done "more through word-of-mouth". The agency is considering stepping up its publicity in black newspapers and meeting with church groups. Although more black families are applying now than when the program was started, there is still a need for black applicants.

Intra-agency modifications or innovations. The placement of black children in adoptive homes must be approached in a positive manner and all staff are attuned to this approach. The study is focused on whether a family will be beneficial to a child and the agency will not refuse applicants unless there is a positive and factual indication that they won't be good for the child. Thus the agency doesn't screen out applicants and there aren't many dropouts. The personalities of the workers are also important in this effort. There must be sensitivity, a commitment, and enthusiasm.

M.A.P.'s study process requires no more than four or five interviews and these may be held during weekend and evening hours. The average length of time from application to placement is three to four months. If it seems warranted, the pre-application interview may be held in the home. M.A.P.'s application forms are distributed during these interviews, rather than the agency mailing a form to anyone upon request, which is the usual practice. The M.A.P. application is shorter than that used in the regular agency program. Under this project, both black and white mothers may continue to work if they have a good child care plan. In regard to financial status, less information is required on assets, etc., and the

emphasis is not so much on how much applicants earn as on how they manage it. These changes have not been necessary in the regular agency program since there are so few white children and many applicants.

In regard to trans-racial adoption, it is felt that if a black family cannot be found for a black child, placing him in a white family which would be beneficial to him is preferable to leaving the child in foster care for an indefinite period. However, the evaluation of white applicants requesting black children is a "big job" and the primary area to be studied is their motivation. The agency has "few children for single parents" and only 12 to 15 such placements have been made since the project began. Although Washington hasn't passed a subsidy law, the agency considers their aid to permanent boarding homes as a form of subsidy and there are other special situations for which financial help can be given on a limited basis.

Inter-agency efforts. All of the public and voluntary children's agencies in the four counties served work in close cooperation with the program's staff members. Cooperating agencies register their available children with the Washington State Adoption Resource Exchange (WARE) and M.A.P. recruits and studies applicants.

Board members of other agencies, who were on M.A.P.'s Advisory Committee, reported to their respective agencies on methods and approaches which M.A.P. found useful in the adoption of black children.

Problems and Obstacles Encountered and Steps Taken to Solve, If Any:

A lack of funds is the agency's greatest problem and this situation will probably worsen since M.A.P. applicants pay no fees and there is a decreasing supply of white babies available for the agency's regular program. Also, two staff members who are no longer with the agency can't be replaced.

Another problem is a lack of vigorous recruitment efforts by other Seattle agencies. Also, Catholic Children's Service's children must be placed in Catholic homes and this limits M.A.P. in their placement.

It is difficult to find qualified black staff because OEO and Model Cities agencies pay higher salaries and because the schools graduate relatively few blacks.

Factors Reported as Most Helpful: The "positive approach" used in dealing with inquiries and applicants is very helpful in promoting the adoption of black children. Showing the children on television brings results, as do "word-of-mouth" referrals from one applicant or adoptive parents to others. However, television and radio spot announcements of 10, 20, or 30 seconds have been the most effective recruitment device. A competent, imaginative, and sympathetic public relations consultant is also important.

Cost to Adoptive Parent:

Agency fee--None.

Medical fee--Cost of medical examination.

Legal fee--Those families who can't pay the regular $150.00 fee are referred to a legal firm which provides free service.

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